

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Previously Presented) A telecommunication cable comprising an elongated element housing at least one transmitting element, said elongated element comprising a water-soluble polymeric composition which comprises:

a vinyl alcohol/vinyl acetate copolymer having a saponification degree from about 60% to about 95%;

a plasticizer; and

a hydrolysis stabilizer compound comprising a chelant group comprising two hydrogen atoms bonded to two respective heteroatoms selected from nitrogen, oxygen and sulfur, said two hydrogen atoms having a distance between each other of  $4.2 \times 10^{-10}$  m to  $5.8 \times 10^{-10}$  m, said stabilizer compound being present in an amount of at least 0.75 mmoles per 100 g of copolymer.

2. (Previously Presented) The telecommunication cable according to claim 1, wherein the amount of said hydrolysis stabilizer compound comprising a chelant group is at least 0.8 mmoles per 100 g of said copolymer.

3. (Previously Presented) The telecommunication cable according to claim 1, wherein the amount of said hydrolysis stabilizer compound comprising a chelant group is at least 1.0 mmoles per 100 g of said copolymer.

4. (Previously Presented) The telecommunication cable according to claim 1, wherein the amount of said hydrolysis stabilizer compound comprising a chelant group is lower than about 3.5 mmoles per 100 g of said copolymer.

5. (Previously Presented) The telecommunication cable according to claim 1, wherein the amount of said hydrolysis stabilizer compound comprising a chelant group is lower than about 3.0 mmoles per 100 g of copolymer.

6. (Previously Presented) The telecommunication cable according to claim 1, wherein said two heteroatoms forming said chelant group are nitrogen atoms.

7. (Previously Presented) The telecommunication cable according to claim 6, wherein said two nitrogen atoms are included in two respective amide moieties of the formula -CO-NH-.

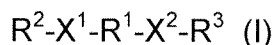
8. (Previously Presented) The telecommunication cable according to claim 1, wherein the amount of copolymer is about 50% to about 95% of the total weight of the polymeric composition.

9. (Previously Presented) The telecommunication cable according to claim 1, wherein the amount of copolymer is about 60% to 85% of the total weight of the polymeric composition.

10. (Previously Presented) The telecommunication cable according to claim 1, wherein said plasticizer is present in an amount of 5 to 30 parts by weight per hundred parts by weight of the copolymer.

11. (Previously Presented) The telecommunication cable according to claim 1, wherein said plasticizer is present in an amount of 10 to 25 parts by weight per hundred parts by weight of the copolymer.

12. (Previously Presented) The telecommunication cable according to claim 1, wherein said stabilizer compound is a compound of formula I:



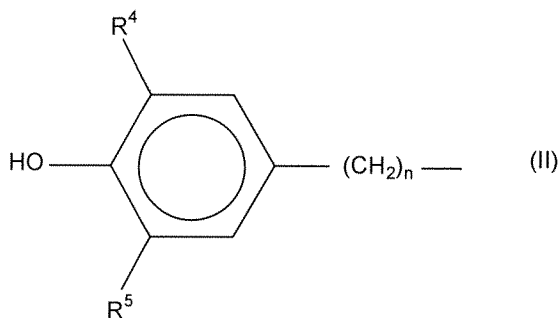
wherein

$R^1$  represents a linear or branched  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$  alkylene, optionally substituted with one or two groups selected from alkyl substituted or unsubstituted phenyl, benzyl or hydroxyphenyl;

$X^1$  and  $X^2$  each independently represent a moiety comprising a heteroatom-bonded hydrogen selected from  $-NH-$ ,  $-CO-NH-$ ,  $-CH(OH)-$  or  $-CH(SH)-$ ; and

each of  $R^2$  and  $R^3$  independently represent a linear or branched  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$  alkyl, optionally substituted with a group selected from alkyl substituted or unsubstituted phenyl, benzyl or hydroxyphenyl.

13. (Currently Amended) The telecommunication cable according to claim 12, wherein  $R^2$  and  $R^3$  each independently represent a moiety of formula (II):

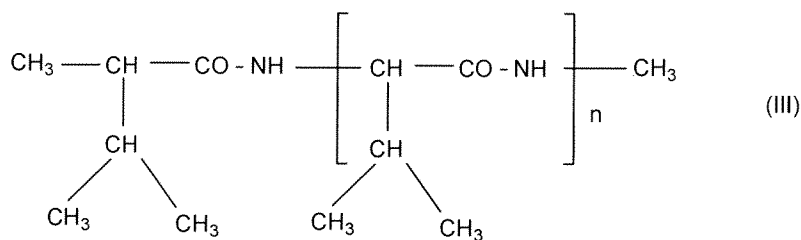


wherein  $R^4$  and  $R^5$  independently represent a  $C_1$ - $C_6$  linear or branched alkyl moiety, and  $n$  is an integer from  $[[0]]$  1 to 6.

14. (Previously Presented) The telecommunication cable according to claim 12, wherein said heteroatom moieties  $X_1$  and  $X_2$  are amide groups of the formula -CO-NH-.

15. (Currently Amended) The telecommunication cable according to claim 1, wherein said stabilizer compound is ~~N,N'-hexane-1,6-diylbis[3,5-di-(ter-butyl-4-hydroxyphenyl)propionamide]~~ N,N'-hexane-1,6-diylbis [3-(3,5-di-tert-butyl-4-hydroxyphenyl) propionamide].

16. (Currently Amended) The telecommunication cable according to claim 1, wherein said stabilizer compound is a ~~poli-L-aminoacid~~ poly-L-amino acid of formula (III):



where  $n$  is an integer from 1 to 5.

17. (Previously Presented) The telecommunication cable according to claim 1, wherein said copolymer has a hydrolysis degree of about 70% to about 92%.

18. (Previously Presented) The telecommunication cable according to claim 1, wherein said elongated element containing at least one transmitting element is

a tubular element comprising at least one sheath made from said water-soluble polymeric composition.

19. (Previously Presented) The telecommunication cable according to claim 18, wherein said tubular element comprises a double layer sheath in which the inner sheath is made from said water-soluble polymeric composition and the outer sheath is made from a water-insoluble polymer material.

20. (Previously Presented) The telecommunication cable according to claim 18, wherein said tubular element further comprises a third outer sheath made from said water-soluble polymeric composition.

21. (Previously Presented) The telecommunication cable according to claim 1, wherein said elongated element is a grooved core comprising at least one groove longitudinally disposed on the outer surface of said core and housing said at least one transmitting element.

22. (Previously Presented) The telecommunication cable according to claim 1, wherein the distance between the two hydrogen atoms is  $4.5 \times 10^{-10}$  m to  $5.5 \times 10^{-10}$  m.

23. (Previously Presented) The telecommunication cable according to claim 12, wherein the linear or branched  $C_1$ - $C_{10}$  alkylene of  $R^1$  is substituted with one or two groups selected from alkyl, substituted or unsubstituted phenyl, benzyl or hydroxyphenyl.

24. (Previously Presented) The telecommunication cable according to claim 12, wherein the linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>10</sub> alkyl of R<sup>2</sup> and R<sup>3</sup> is substituted with a group selected from alkyl, substituted or unsubstituted phenyl, benzyl or hydroxyphenyl.

25. (Previously Presented) The telecommunication cable according to claim 13, wherein the C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>6</sub> linear or branched alkyl moiety is t-butyl.

26. (Previously Presented) The telecommunication cable according to claim 13, wherein n is 2.

27. (New) The telecommunication cable according to claim 1, wherein the vinyl alcohol/vinyl acetate copolymer exhibits a saponification number of about 108 to about 114.

28. (New) The telecommunication cable according to claim 27, wherein the vinyl alcohol/vinyl acetate copolymer exhibits a variation of saponification number of less than about 6.5% after subjecting said copolymer to a relative humidity of about 50% at a temperature of about 85% for about 30 days.